

In the Specification

In the Field of the Invention, please amend the paragraph in lines 3-5 on page 2 as follows:

The present invention relates generally to electronic communication systems, and more specifically to a method ~~and system~~ for excluding recipients in an electronic communication system using an exclude operation.

In the Summary of the Invention, please amend the text beginning at line 15 on page 4 and ending on line 11 of page 6 as follows:

To address the problems described above and others, a method ~~is and system are~~ disclosed that enables a communications system user to conveniently define entities to be excluded from receiving an electronic communication, such as an electronic mail ("email") message. In an illustrative embodiment, the disclosed ~~method system~~ provides an "Exclude" user entry field in a user interface to an email system. The Exclude field accepts entry of an "exclude set" of entities to be excluded from being recipients of an email message being processed or defined in a currently accessible graphical user interface window. The disclosed Exclude field is provided in a user interface window together with one or more other user entry fields available for definition and/or review of an "include set" of entities initially designated for receipt of the message.

The user entry fields available for definition and/or review of an "include set" may, for example, include a cc: ("carbon copy") user entry field, a bcc: ("blind carbon copy") user entry field, as well as the To: user entry field. The bcc: user entry field lists addresses, groups, or lists, to which the message will be sent, but which will not be seen by the recipients, while the contents of the cc: field will be visible to all recipients.

The disclosed methodsystem is applicable to a variety of communication systems, such as email and other similar methods of communication. The entities processed using the disclosed methodsystem may be mailing and distribution lists, user-defined groups, individual email addresses, aliases, or other specific types of recipient identifiers as appropriate to a specific communication system. In some cases, multiple recipients are addressed by a single recipient identifier, like an email address. The specific title or image identifying the Exclude field may include a text title of "Exclude", or provide any other textual or graphic indication of the field, as appropriate. The Exclude field may be adjacent to the fields defining the include set, or in some other location within the user interface window. The disclosed methodsystem processes one or more entities identifiers entered by a user into the Exclude field by preventing those entities from receiving the email/communication. Accordingly, the disclosed methodsystem may be used to exclude an individual within a group or list from receiving a message, or to exclude irrelevant users from receiving a message otherwise received by all recipients in an ongoing email thread in which recipients are replying to all users within a group using a "Reply All" email function. The disclosed methodsystem can be used to exclude any specified set of entities from the set of recipients.

The disclosed methodsystem provides significant advantages over the prior art. Specifically, the disclosed methodsystem enables a user to exclude recipients from an ongoing

discussion using email, as easily as the user can add recipients to the ongoing discussion. The disclosed ~~method~~system may further operate to process email groups and/or lists by resolving their contents on either the client or server side. Moreover, in contrast to bulk email systems designed to send large numbers of copies of a single email message, the present invention automates the exclusion of entities from individual messages in a way that is useful to the general email user. For many users, this will translate into a) saving keystrokes, and b) eliminating the trouble of remembering all the entities on a list or in a group. The disclosed ~~method~~system also potentially reduces network traffic and disk space usage, since the amount of overall traffic is reduced through its use.